

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 055158

FOL RPT LAGOS 2643 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO MOGADISCIO, ADDIS
ABABA, MOSCOW & ROME DTD 02 MAR 78

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 2643

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, ET, SO

SUBJECT: THE HORN: LAGOS MEETING

REF: STATE 53461

1. IN AFTERMATH OF ETHIOPIAN DELEGATION MEETING YESTERDAY WITH
OBASANJO, WE HAVE OBTAINED INFORMATION ON RESULTS OF TALKS FROM
ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR, ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES (THE CHANNEL THE ETHIOPIAN
EMBASSY USES TO COMMUNICATE WITH ADDIS ABABA), ITALIAN EMBASSY
(THEY HAVE GOOD CONTACTS HERE ON HORN MATTERS), SAMLI CHARGE'
AND WORKING-LEVEL MEA OFFICIALS. ALL SOURCES CONFIRM, AS PREDICTED
IN LAGOS 2267, THAT CONVERSATIONS PRODUCED ZERO RPT ZERO
PROGRESS ON NARROWING GAP BETWEEN SOMALI AND ETHIOPIAN ATTITUDES
TOWARD NEGOTIATIONS OR THE KEY ISSUES AT STAKE.

2. MEA OFFICIAL TOLD ITALIAN EMBASSY THIS MORNING THAT, IN VIEW
OF POSITIONS NOW PRESENTED TO FMG BY DELEGATIONS FROM EACH SIDE,
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NIGERIA WILL NOW RPT NOW CALL FOR MEETING OF EIGHT-NATION OAU
GOOD OFFICES COMMISSION. ACCORDING TO MEA OFFICIAL, NEITHER THE
ETHIOPIANS NOR THE SOMALIS WERE WILLING TO ACCEPT ANY SECURITY
COUNCIL ROLE. (COMMENT: ITALIANS ASSUME AND WE AGREE THAT
THRUST OF NIGERIAN PRESENTATION TO COMMISSION WILL BE INABILITY OF
NIGERIANS TO OBTAIN ANY SENSE OF COMPROMISE FROM EITHER SIDE.)

3. ACCORDING TO ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR, ETHIOPIAN DELEGATION CAME TO LAGOS ONLY IN DEFERENCE TO OAU PRINCIPLES AND STOOD FIRM IN TALKS WITH FMG REGARDING ETHIOPIAN INSISTENCE THAT THERE IS NOTHING TO MEDIATE. THE DELEGATION REFUSED TO ACCEPT OBASANJO'S ATTEMPT TO LINK A SOMALI WITHDRAWAL WITH SELF-DETERMINATION OR AUTONOMY FOR THE OGADEN. IN THE ETHIOPIAN VIEW, THE ONLY ROLE THE OAU CAN PLAY IS TO FORCE SOMALIA TO WITHDRAW. THE PROBLEM OF THE FUTURE OF THE OGADEN MUST BE LEFT EXCLUSIVELY TO ETHIOPIA. NO RPT NO MEDDLING IN INTERNAL ETHIOPIAN MATTERS CAN BE TOLERATED FROM THE OAU OR FROM ANY COUNTRY, AFRICAN OR OTHERWISE. ETHIOPIA HAS NO OBJECTION TO A MEETING OF THE GOOD OFFICES COMMISSION PROVIDED THESE PRINCIPLES ARE UNDERSTOOD. THE DELEGATION WILL HOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE TOMORROW MORNING, FRIDAY, PRIOR TO DEPARTURE FROM LAGOS. THEY CAN BE EXPECTED TO MAKE THESE POSITIONS PUBLIC AT THE CONFERENCE.

4. SOMALI AMBASSADOR GARRAD IS CURRENTLY IN TRIPOLI WITH PRESIDENT SIAD. HIS CHARGE' REPORTS THAT MINISTER KASSIM TOLD OBASANJO DURING HIS VISIT HERE LAST WEEK THAT SOMALIA MIGHT IN DESPERATION ACCEPT A 'MOVE FROM THE SOVIETS' TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM. THE ITALIAN EMBASSY HERE SAYS THIS STATEMENT FITS WITH A REMARK BY THE SOMALI FOREIGN MINISTER TO FORLANI RECENTLY IN ROME TO THE EFFECT THAT SOMALIA MIGHT SOON HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE TO TURNING TO THEIR ERSTWHILE SOVIET PROTECTORS.

5. THE FMG IS PUZZLED BY SIAD'S TRIP TO TRIPOLI, INTERPRETING
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IT AS A POSSIBLE MOVE TO DEMONSTRATE THAT SOMALIA STILL HAS
CARDS TO PLAY.

6. ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES REPRESENTATIVE HAS INFORMED US THAT ETHIOPIAN DELEGATION HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED POINT OUT TO FMG THAT US AS WELL AS SOVIETS MAINTAINED TROOPS OVERSEAS. INSTRUCTION CONTAINED A BREAKDOWN OF NUMBER OF US TROOPS ABROAD BY COUNTRY.

7. I WILL BE SEEING GARBA FRIDAY AT 12 NOON LAGOS TIME AND
WILL REPORT RESULTS BY IMMEDIATE NIACT MESSAGE.

EASUM
UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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